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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/622,927	07/19/2003	Katsutoshi Shibayama	8177	2773
7590	11/22/2004		EXAMINER	
Woodling, Krost and Rust (Kenneth L. Mitchell) 9213 Chillicothe Road Kirtland, OH 44094				RIDLEY, RICHARD
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		3651		

DATE MAILED: 11/22/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/622,927	SHIBAYAMA ET AL. <i>S</i>
	Examiner Richard Ridley	Art Unit 3651

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 September 2004.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 6 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1,4 and 5 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 2 and 3 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9-27-04.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Newly submitted claim 6 directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: The claimed subject matter of claimed 6 is directed towards the retaining pin and how it is retained in the hinge via keyed apertures. This subject matter is independent and distinct from the originally presented subject matter.

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claim 6 is withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1, 4, 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Horton USP 5,921,379. Horton discloses a similar device comprising a(n):

➤ Plurality of links (fig. 3A) each link containing a top plate (24) having a continuous flat top surface (the flat surface of the top plate extend to include a portion of the upper surface of the hinge)

- Hinge portion (38-40) provided on said top plate
- Wherein the continuous flat surface portion of engagement portions between adjacent links overlap with each other [see top view of conveyor in fig. 1 & 3A which show that the continuous flat surface (24 and including a portion of the upper surface of the hinge) between adjacent links overlap with each other]
- Curved conveying section (fig. 3A; C3/L41)
- Pin (26) defining a central axis
- Front and rear hinge portions (34 & 38-40)

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 2, 3 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed 9-27-04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The applicant argues that Horton does not disclose overlapping of the continuous flat surface portions. In response the examiner notes fig. 1 & 3A of Horton that show overlapping of the continuous flat surface portions (24 and including a portion of the upper surface of the hinge).

Additionally, the applicant argues that Horton does not disclose a central axis. In response the examiner argues that this recitation in the claim, as it fails to provide a frame of reference, thus renders the recitation extremely broad. Horton discloses at least one central axis e.g. the pin alone has a central axis running radially along its length.

Conclusion

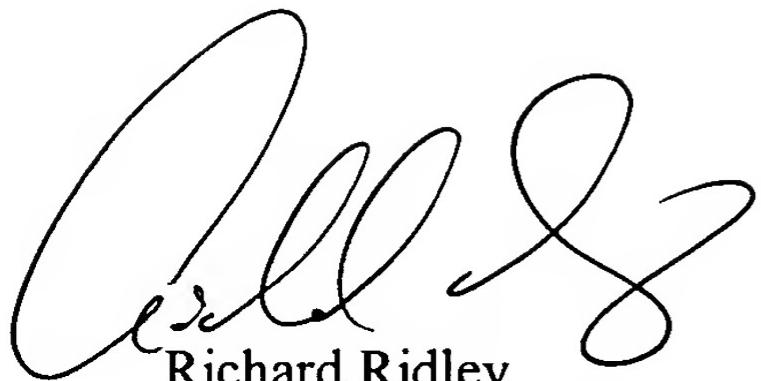
5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Richard Ridley whose telephone number is (703) 306-5910. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thur 7:00 am - 5:15 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Chris Ellis can be reached on (703) 308-1113. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Richard Ridley
18 November 2004

Richard Ridley
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3651